

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6820

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUITO 6140

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR SHUM UN EC IS

SUBJECT: ECUADOREAN ATTITUDES TOWARD ISRAELI SUSPENSION FROM UN

REF: QUITO 5982

1. SUMMARY: ECUADOREAN PUBLIC ATTITUDES ARE RUNNING HEAVILY AGAINST THE MOVE TO EXPEL ISRAEL FROM THE UN, AT LEAST INsofar AS THESE ATTITUDES ARE REPRESENTED IN THE NEWSPAPERS. A NATIONAL COMMITTEE HAS BEEN FORMED TO STUDY THE SITUATION OF THE JEWISH MINORITY IN THE USSR AND PROTEST RESPRESSION BEFORE THE ECUADOREAN PEOPLE AND VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL BODIES. TWO ARAB DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES RECENTLY VISITED ECUADOR AND MAY HAVE TRIED TO PERSUADE THE GOE THAT IT SHOULD VOTE AGAINST CONTINUED ISRAELI PARTICIPATION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY; BASED ON ECUADOREAN FOREIGN MINISTER LUCIO PAREDES' COMMENTS TO AMBASSADOR (REFTEL), WE DOUBT THEY HAD MUCH LUCK. END SUMMARY.

2. WITHIN THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS, ECUADOREAN PUBLIC OPINION HAS GRADUALLY SHOWN AN INCREASED AWARENESS OF
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THE DANGER THAT ARAB STATES MIGHT TRY TO OUST ISRAEL

FROM CONTINUED PARTICIPATION IN THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY. THREE OF THE FOUR MAJOR NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS HAVE PUBLISHED COLUMNS ON THE ISSUE (COLUMNS FREQUENTLY BEING A SUBSTITUTE FOR EDITORIAL OPINION IN THIS COUNTRY); DENOUNCING THE EFFORT TO DENY ISRAEL A SEAT IN THE UNGA; ASCRIBING THIS EFFORT TO THE ARABS; AND ALL REFERRING TO THE "HEROIC EFFORTS" OF ISRAEL TO MAINTAIN ITS INDEPENDENCE IN THE FACE OF HOSTILE NEIGHBORS.

3. ON SATURDAY, JULY 26TH, A GROUP OF ABOUT 60 OF QUITO'S LEADING CITIZENS (POLITICAL FIGURES, ARTISTS, WRITERS, EDUCATORS, CLERICS, ETC) MET IN THE HASS OF "ISABEL LA CATOLICA" (NOTABLE FOR HER ROLE IN SECURING THE EXPLUSION OF JEWS FROM SPAIN IN 1492) TO FORM THE "PERMANENT ECUADOREAN COMMITTEE FOR THE STUDY OF THE SITUATION OF THE JEWISH MINORITY IN THE SOVIET UNION." THEY PRODUCED A "PERMANENT COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF SOVIET JEWS" WITH NEARLY 80 ADHERENTS, INCLUDING FRANCISCO HUERTA (2ND OR 3RD MOST POPULAR POLITICAL FIGURE IN ECUADOR AND SERIOUS PRESIDENTIAL POSSIBILITY) AND ADOPTED RESOLUTIONS WHICH CALLED FOR TAKING THE ISSUE OF SOVIET REPRESSION OF THE JEWISH MINORITY TO THE UN AND VARIOUS OTHER INTERNATIONAL AND INTER-AMERICAN ORGANIZATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEES; PROTESTING DIRECTLY TO SOVIET DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES IN ECUADOR; AND PUBLISCISING WITHIN ECUADOR SOVIET REPRESSION OF MINORITIES.

4. AND AT THE END OF JUNE, TWO ARAB DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVE (DRISS BENNOUMA, MOROCCAN AMBASSADOR TO LIBYA, AND SIDI BOUNA, MAURITANIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE SOVIET UNION) STOPPED IN ECUADOR DURING WHAT WAS DESCRIBED TO THE PRESS AS A SPECIAL MISSION TO LATIN AMERICA. THE PAIR WAS RECEIVED BY BOTH FOREIGN MINISTER LUCIO PAREDES AND PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ LARA, AND WE HAVE HEARD FROM LOWER-LEVEL OFFICIALS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT THE TWO EXPLAINED THE ARAB POSITION AND TRIED TO SELL THE GOE ON EXPLUSION OF ISRAEL FROM THE UN.

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE SINCE HAD, HOWEVER, AUTHORITATIVE PRONOUNCEMENTS ON THE GOE POSITION (FROM FOREIGN MINISTER CONFIDENTIAL

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LUCIO PAREDES TO AMBASSADOR, REFTTEL) TO THE EFFECT THAT ECUADOR WILL SUPPORT THE ISRAELI POSITION. WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT THAT THIS WILL BE THE CASE.
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